

### *Amendments*

In accordance with 37 CFR §1.121, please amend the above-identified application as set forth below.

#### *Amendments to the Claims:*

Please amend the claims as set forth below.

Claims 1 – 37 (Withdrawn)

Claim 38 (Original) A pad for use with a continent ostomy port, the pad comprising a body portion having an internal wall defining an aperture appropriately sized to place around a stoma, the body portion of the pad being sized and shaped for placement against a user's skin beneath a face plate of an ostomy port, the pad being formed of a soft, flexible material to thereby cushion and protect the skin from contact with the ostomy port face plate, wherein the body portion of the pad has a stepped configuration on a distal surface thereof, the stepped configuration consisting of at least two distinct levels.

Claim 39 (Currently amended) The pad of claim 38, wherein the at least two distinct levels comprise a first level and a second level, the first level having a perimeter sized and shaped appropriately to readily fit within a perimeter of a face plate lip of a ~~COP~~ continent ostomy port, and the second level extending parallel to the first level and having a perimeter extending beyond the perimeter of the first level, beneath the lip of the plate, to thereby protect the user's skin from friction irritation.

Claim 40 (Original) The pad of claim 38, wherein the pad is formed of a material which is readily disposable.

Claim 41 (Original) The pad of claim 38, wherein the pad is formed of a material that is capable of being facilely cleaned and reused.

Claim 42 (Original) The pad of claim 38, wherein the distal surface of the pad is coated with a thin, liquid impermeable skin to thereby trap wicked moisture within the pad.

Claim 43 (Original) A pad for use with a continent ostomy port, the pad comprising a body portion having an internal wall defining an aperture appropriately sized to place around a stoma, the body portion of the pad being sized and shaped for placement against a user's skin beneath a face plate of an ostomy port, the pad being formed of a soft, flexible material to thereby cushion and protect the skin from contact with the ostomy port face plate, wherein a distal surface of the pad is coated with a thin, liquid impermeable skin to thereby trap wicked moisture within the pad.

Claim 44 (Original) The pad of claim 43, and further wherein the liquid impermeable skin is permeable to air, to thereby permit the pad area to breathe.

Claim 45 (Original) The pad of claim 43, wherein the pad is formed of a material which is readily disposable.

Claim 46 (Original) The pad of claim 43, wherein the pad is formed of material that is capable of being facilely cleaned and reused.

Claim 47 (Original) A pad for use with a continent ostomy port, the pad comprising a body portion defining an aperture appropriately sized to place around the catheter of a continent ostomy port, the body portion of the pad being sized and shaped for placement against a user's skin beneath a face plate of the ostomy port, the pad being formed of a soft, flexible material to thereby cushion and protect a user's skin from contact with the ostomy port face plate, wherein the pad body portion has a distal surface provided with a central indented region to thereby accommodate the distal portions of the continent ostomy port.

Claim 48 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the central indented region of the distal

surface of the pad body portion is generally cross-shaped.

Claim 49 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the central indented region of the distal surface of the pad body portion has a substantially flat floor.

Claim 50 (Original) The pad of claim 47 wherein the central indented region of the distal surface of the pad body portion has a floor that defines the aperture for placement around a catheter of the continent ostomy port.

Claim 51 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the distal surface of the pad is domed and the central indented region includes two opposed channels extending radially away from the center of the pad, to thereby permit access to a finger grip on a distal end of the continent ostomy port.

Claim 52 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the central indented region includes two opposed cut-out areas extending radially away from the center of the pad, to thereby accommodate structural features on a distal end of the continent ostomy port.

Claim 53 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the pad includes a proximal surface having a depending ring disposed coaxially with the aperture in the pad and spacedly outwardly therefrom.

Claim 54 (Original) The pad of claim 53, and further comprising a channel formed between the depending ring and the perimeter of the pad.

Claim 55 (Original) The pad of claim 53, and further comprising a layer of adhesive on the proximal surface of the pad.

Claim 56 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the pad is formed of a disposable material

Claim 57 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the pad is formed of a material which can be cleaned and reused.

Claim 58 (Original) The pad of claim 47, wherein the body of the pad is generally oval.

Claim 59 (Original) The combination of a pad for use with a continent ostomy port and a shim,

wherein the pad comprises a body portion defining an aperture appropriately sized to place around the catheter of a continent ostomy port, the body portion of the pad being sized and shaped for placement against a user's skin beneath a face plate of the ostomy port, the pad being formed of a soft, flexible material to thereby cushion and protect a user's skin from contact with the ostomy port face plate, wherein the pad body portion has a distal surface provided with a central indented region to thereby accommodate distal portions of the continent ostomy port, wherein the pad includes a proximal surface; and a shim having a through hole positioned coaxially with the aperture in the pad on the side of the proximal surface of the pad.

Claim 60 (Original) The combination of claim 59, wherein the pad has a depending ring on the proximal surface thereof, the depending ring being disposed coaxially with the aperture in the pad and spaced radially outwardly therefrom to thereby provide a channel between the depending ring and the perimeter of the pad and the shim has an overall size and shape to permit the shim to fit snugly within the channel formed in the proximal surface of the pad.

Claim 61 (Original) The combination of claim 59, wherein the shim has an overall size and shape sufficient to permit the shim to hold the pad away from the user's skin.

Claim 62 (Original) The combination of claim 59, and further comprising a layer of adhesive on the proximal surface of the pad.

Claim 63 (Original) The combination of claim 59, wherein the perimeter of the pad is substantially oval.

Claim 64 (Original) The combination of claim 59, wherein the body of the pad is generally domed.

Claim 65 (Original) The combination of claim 59, wherein the distal surface of the pad is coated with a thin, liquid impermeable skin to thereby trap wicked moisture within the pad.

Claim 66 (Original) The combination of claim 59, and further comprising a layer of adhesive on at least one of the distal side and the proximal side of the shim.

Claim 67 (Currently amended) A method for protecting the skin of a user around a stoma of the user, comprising:

attaching a pad around a continent ostomy port, the pad having a body portion defining an aperture appropriately sized to place around a catheter of the continent ostomy port, and a distal surface provided with a central indented region to thereby accommodate distal portions of the continent ostomy port; and

positioning the pad beneath a face plate of the ostomy port against the user's skin for cushioning ~~an~~ and protecting the user's skin from contact with the ostomy face plate.

Claim 68 (Original) The method of claim 67, and further comprising the step of providing a shim having a through-hole and positioning the shim so that the through-hole aligns with the aperture in the pad.

Claim 69 (Original) The method of claim 68 wherein the pad includes a proximal surface having a depending ring disposed coaxially with the aperture in the pad and spacedly outwardly therefrom and a channel formed between the depending ring and the perimeter of the pad, and the method further comprises disposing the shim snugly within the channel formed in the proximal surface of the pad between the depending ring and the perimeter of the pad.

/

/

/

/